

# Defining Goals and Learning Objectives for a Longitudinal Clerkship in the Complex Context of Health Care

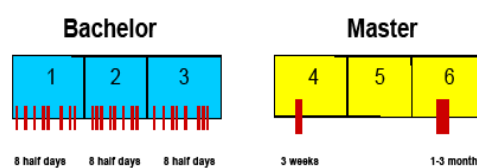
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## Aim and purpose

In autumn 2007 the Swiss Medical School of Bern implemented mandatory short-term clerkships in primary health care for all undergraduate medical students. Students studying for a Bachelor's degree complete 8 half-days per year in the surgery of a general practitioner, while students studying for a Master's complete a three-week clerkship. Every student completes his/her clerkship in the same GP practice during his/her four years of study. The purpose of this paper is to show how the goals and learning objectives were developed and evaluated.



## Method

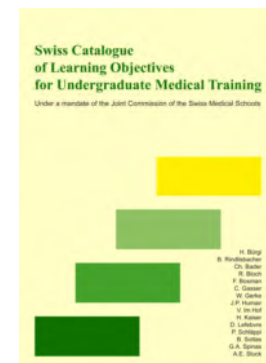
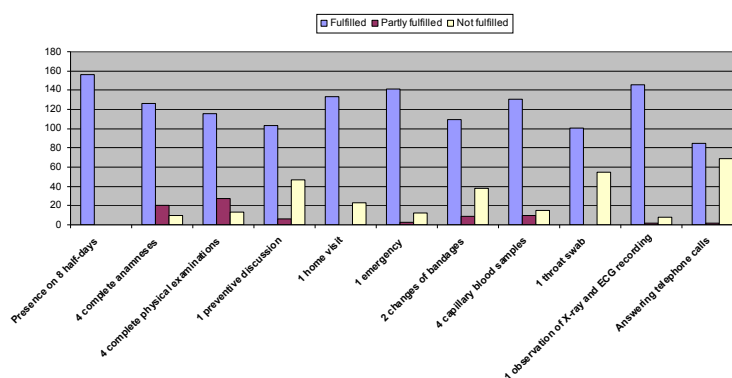
A working group of general practitioners and the Faculty of Medicine had the task of defining goals and learning objectives for a specific training program within the complex context of primary health care. The group based its work on various national and international publications.

A list of minimum requirements for the clerkships, an oral exam in the first year, and an OSCE (objective structured clinical examination) station in the 3rd year assessed achievements of the learning objectives.



## Fulfilment of Minimum Requirements in 3rd year of study

Response rate 98%



## Conclusions

Most of the defined learning objectives were taught, and duly learned by the students. Some learning objectives proved to be incompatible in the context of ambulatory primary care and had to be adjusted accordingly:

- **Complete anamnesis / complete physical examination:** proved to be impracticable → change to **problem-oriented**.
- **Throat swab:** canceled, too early for year 1.
- **Preventive discussion:** Too early for year 3 → moved to year 4.
- **Answering telephone calls:** 3rd and 4th year students' specialised knowledge still too low! Incompetence on telephone calls damages the image of the GP practice → canceled.

The achievement of minimum requirements (and hence of the learning objectives) for clerkships has been mandatory since 2008. Further evaluations will show whether additional learning objectives need to be adopted.